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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

Research and Analysis Branch

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NOTES ON PRICES AND AVAILABILITY OF CONSUMER GOODS IN AXIS EUROPE

Preliminary and fragmentary information on prevailing prices for everyday commodities in Axis Europe, together with brief discussions of factors affecting the availability of such commodities to the consumers in each country.

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SUMMARY

On the basis of the data presented in this study, no general conclusions can be drawn, but for each country certain broad price trends can be discerned, and a preliminary assessment made of the various factors affecting availability of consumer goods.

1. Belgium: Both official and black market prices appear to be rising. During 1943 there was some improvement in the availability of rations, but shortages of clothing, shoes and fuel became worse. Evasion of farm controls has developed into an effective form of resistance, especially when combined with raids on government food stocks and on collaborationist farms and shops.

2. Czechoslovakia -- Protectorate: Price control and rationing have been fairly effective, but occasional unavailability of rations has necessitated black market purchases. There are severe shortages of most consumer goods; distribution of clothing is limited to air-raid victims and special consumer categories. Farm controls are well organized and food sales strictly supervised, but withholding by farmers and for direct trading with consumers goes on nevertheless, and barter is increasing.

3. Czechoslovakia -- Slovakia: Though food prices have in general been held down fairly well, prices of all edible fats have greatly increased. Rations are not always available, some commodities (all fats) being either entirely unobtainable or available only to special

consumer classes. Withholding of supplies from the legal market is widely practiced by both farmers and dealers.

4. Denmark: Prices are well controlled; there is no black market to speak of. Few foods are rationed, and rations are generally available in full, though unrationed foods are sometimes seasonally scarce. Clothing, shoes, and other consumer goods are in increasingly short supply. Food production and distribution are efficient, with comparatively little government control or Nazi interference. Barter and hoarding are in general limited to luxury goods.

5. France: Official prices (especially for meat, butter, edible oil, and clothing) have risen greatly, but black market prices are reported decreasing somewhat. Food shortages are in general severe for city dwellers, who must supplement by illegal purchases and by barter with farmers such foods as they can obtain legally. Shortages of all consumer goods are increasingly serious.

6. Germany: The official price line has been well held, and rationed foods are usually available on legal markets, although heavy raids produce temporary maldistribution. Clothing and household goods are increasingly scarce, and distribution is now limited to air raid victims who have lost all their belongings, and to special classes of consumers. Farm controls are highly organized and efficiently administered, with severe penalties for

withholding or illegal sale of produce. Barter of consumer goods is so widespread that it has been "legalized" by the establishment of special barter centers, but hoarding and illegal bartering continue.

7. Hungary: Official prices are fairly well controlled, without excessive increases except in clothes and shoes. Rations are in general available, though some foods (rice, poultry, edible oil, cheese) are unobtainable except on the black market. Consumer goods are in general rather scarce. Farm controls are fairly strict, but are widely evaded, and direct city-country trade flourishes under more or less nominal restrictions.

8. Netherlands: Official prices are not rising rapidly, but black market transactions in essential foods are increasing, despite denials that they exist. Dairy products and vegetables are scarce; clothing and household goods are no longer available except to air-raid victims and special cases. Illegal sales and withholding of farm produce are increasing.

9. Norway: Official prices are rising, but prices on the black market (direct farmer-consumer trade in evasion of Nazi food controls) are reported decreasing. All essential foods are short, and rations are often unobtainable. Clothing, shoes, and most other consumer goods are scarce and of poor quality. There are severe farm controls, enforced against strong resistance.

10. Poland: Official prices have skyrocketed since 1939; prices on the black market are so high that many Poles cannot afford to pay them, but must barter their remaining possessions for food. Rations are in general small, and frequently unavailable. All other commodities are extremely scarce; barter is universal.

INTRODUCTION

For most of the countries concerned, some material is available on official and black market prices for commodities in everyday use.[1] This is presented, however incomplete in scope, in answer to a specific request for any such information, no matter how fragmentary. It should be stressed, however, that these price lists are incomplete, with many cost-of-living items not represented, and that in gauging the general price level, changes in wages have to be taken into consideration.

Similarly, the brief statements on factors affecting availability of everyday commodities to the consumer are offered in advance of comprehensive studies, now being prepared in this Section, on problems of price and distribution controls in occupied areas, anti-inflation controls, and controls of food production, collection, and allocation. Such comments as can here be presented are of general interest only, and to draw specific conclusions from them would be unwise and premature.

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1. Official prices for 1939 and 1942 are quoted from "Retail Food Prices", 1 July 1942, by NEW. Accession No. 20394C.

I. BELGIUM

A. Prices

The following table shows some typical official prices (in Belgian francs per kilogram) for everyday commodities in 1939 and 1942, together with selected official and black market prices for 1942 and 1943:

	Official			Black Market	
	1939	1942	1943	1942	1943
Bread	1.90	2.90	--[a]	35.00	90.00
Flour	2.04	3.00	--[a]	60-80.00	70.00
Sugar	3.65	7.10	--[a]	60.00	90.00
Meat:					
Beef	20.70	36.00)	--[a]	80-120.00	--[a]
Pork	22.66	40.00)			
Lard	13.46	16.00	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Milk (liter):					
Unskimmed	1.72	2.40	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Skimmed	0.30	1.10	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Butter	22.08	44.00	30.00	235.00	300.00
Cheese	16.04	29.00	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Eggs (each)	0.91	1.60	--[a]	10.00	--[a]
Margarine	10.00	13.25	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Potatoes	0.66	1.20	2.85	--[a]	20.00
Herring, fresh:					
Coastal districts	--[a]	--[a]	8.50	--[a]	--[a]
Inland	--[a]	--[a]	10.00	--[a]	--[a]

a. No information on price.

Miscellaneous 1943 black market prices charged in Brussels in July 1943 for goods for which no comparative earlier prices are available include the following (in Belgian francs per kilogram): carrots 7.00, cauliflower 15.00, peas 20.00, cherries 25.00, tomatoes 35.00, onions 40.00, asparagus 30.00, celery 35.00, beans 62.00. Canned sardines

cost 87.50 Bf. in June on the black market, and rice 240.00 Bf.; leather boots were priced at 2,000 Bf. in September, and coffee at 1,500 to 1,800 Bf. in October.

B. Scarcities

Rations, even of essential foodstuffs, have not always been available in Belgium, and there have been severe seasonal shortages of fish, fruit and vegetables (especially potatoes). However, some improvement in this regard took place during 1943. With respect to clothing and footwear, the better grades have disappeared from the free market, and even inferior substitutes have often been hard to find. Coal and firewood are likewise difficult to obtain, and black market traffic in fuels is fairly brisk.

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

As in all German-occupied countries, strict surrender quotas have been established for most agricultural produce. Evasion of these controls is frequent in Belgium. Volk en Boden, organ of the Nazi-organized corporation of Belgian peasants, complained at the end of August 1943 that some burgomasters had exceeded their authority by requisitioning local crops to ensure their districts' food supply. Hence the authorities in charge of harvest mobilization and rationing found some farmers unable to meet their quotas, since deductions could not be made for what the burgomasters had collected. Nazi and Belgian authorities have frequently blamed food shortages on the peasants' failure to deliver

their quotas; actually, produce withheld from the quotas reaches the consumer by direct (illegal) sale either on the farm or in clandestine markets. As in France, the authorities have bowed somewhat to this situation by encouraging private contracts with farmers for potatoes, and by permitting each person to purchase 10 percent more than his contract specifies, provided that he can obtain that quantity, too, direct from the farmer.

D Barter and Hoarding

Little is known as to the extent of bartering. It is undoubtedly practiced, but in press reports its existence has been overshadowed by more spectacular developments arising out of the present widespread trend toward large-scale thefts and forgeries of ration cards, raids on collaborationist farms and on government foodstocks, and withholding of produce for the purpose of feeding patriots in hiding. Since the summer of 1943, these practices have badly disrupted the Belgian ration system. In Nazi press accounts, individuals helping in the process are termed "hoarders" and "criminals"; underground organizations leading the movement are "terrorist gangs."

II. CZECHOSLOVAKIA -- PROTECTORATE

A. Prices

The following table shows some typical official prices (in kroner per kilogram) for 1939 and 1942, and a few black market prices for 1942. Though no later prices are available, official prices in 1943 were said to have risen no more than German prices, since price controls are as strict as in Germany.

	Official		Black Market
	1939	1942	1942
Bread:			
Wheat	2.60	4.70	--[a]
Rye	--[a]	2.90	--[a]
Flour	2.80	4.00	14-25.00
Sugar	6.20	7.40	30.00
Meat:			
Beef	16.50	22.30	
Veal	13.00	23.00	60-85.00
Pork	14.00	24.00	
Lard	14.50	21.60	--[a]
Milk (unskimmed, liter)	1.70	2.20	--[a]
Butter	24.00	35.20	80-130.00
Eggs (each)	0.75	1.15	2-3.00
Margarine	13.20	19.00	--[a]
Potatoes	0.70	0.86	--[a]
Carrots	0.95	1.50	--[a]
Cabbage	1.05	2.20	--[a]

a. No information on price.

B. Scarcities

While official prices and rations for Czechs in the Protectorate are roughly in line with those for Germans, rationed quantities of food are not always available for Czechs, and the black market in essential foods is active. (The situation is particularly difficult for Jews, whose rations, even when available, are especially low, and who

in addition are forced to buy on the black market some essential foods forbidden to them on the free market.) Many rationed foodstuffs such as milk, potatoes, and butter are seasonally scarce in cities. Shoes and fuel are usually available, though in rationed quantities and prescribed types. Rations of clothing are at present unavailable, except to expectant mothers, boys and girls, and air-raid victims.

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

Farm production in the Protectorate is highly organized on the German plan. Cultivation of oilseeds and fodder is compulsory and premiums are offered for prompt deliveries of potatoes, rape, flax, mustard, soybeans, sunflower seed, sugar beets, etc. Each year 65 eggs per hen must be delivered. Not only must the farmer surrender his quota of geese, ducks and turkeys, but he must also deliver to the collection center, instead of selling it, any excess over his own needs. Excess hens and chickens over the quota may, however, be sold freely to the consumer. The entire fruit crop must be surrendered. The output of at least 22 percent of all cows is subject to control. The milling and sale of cereals are under strict control. Direct sales of most commodities to consumers are specifically forbidden, though in the case of late potatoes such sale is permitted through control cards.

D. Barter and Hoarding

In the wake of rising prices and lagging wages barter has made its appearance in the Protectorate; numerous advertisements of goods available for barter appear in the newspapers. The practice has not yet reached the proportions it has assumed in Germany, where it has been legalized by the establishment of barter centers. Hoarding receives frequent denunciations in the press, with scathing references to "the crowding of trains by people with parcels and boxes filled with foodstuffs, so that regular travellers cannot get seats." Warnings against such unjustified travelling are coupled with reminders to peasants of the heavy penalties for selling or giving foodstuffs to friends and acquaintances (a practice reminiscent of the "Marché Rose" in France).

III. CZECHOSLOVAKIA -- SLOVAKIA

A. Prices

Official prices of everyday commodities in 1939, 1942, and 1943, with some 1943 black market prices, are presented below (in kroner per kilogram).[1]

	Official			Black Market
	1939	1942	1943	1943
Bread (wheat)	2.08	4.50	2.40	--[a]
Flour	1.18	3.85	4.50	30.00
Sugar	6.35	6.20	6.60	35.00
Meat:				
Beef	11.20	14.50	--[a]	--[a]
Veal	11.30	19.50	--[a]	--[a]
Lard	12.63	--[a]	--[b]	--[a]
Milk (unskimmed, liter)	1.31	2.00	2.40	--[a]
Butter	14.62	32.00	44.00	100.00
Oil (liter)	--[a]	--[a]	--[b]	80.00
Cheese	15.00	20.00	--[a]	--[a]
Eggs (each)	0.60	0.85	2.50	4.00
Margarine	10.95	22.85	3-4.00	12.00
Potatoes	0.80	0.15	--[a]	--[a]
Honey	--[a]	--[a]	31.00	--[a]
Soap:				
Toilet soap	--[a]	--[a]	15.00	--[a]
Washing powder (package)	--[a]	--[a]	2.40	--[a]
Laundry soap	--[a]	--[a]	--[b]	--[a]
Shoes:				
Men's	--[a]	--[a]	331-435.00	--[a]
Women's	--[a]	--[a]	281-337.00	--[a]
Boys'	--[a]	--[a]	182-265.00	--[a]
Children's	--[a]	--[a]	151-175.00	--[a]
Tea	80-100.00	--[a]	--[b]	600.00
Coffee	45-50.00	--[a]	--[b]	500.00

a. No information on price.
b. Product unavailable on legal market.

B. Scarcities

Rations in Slovakia are much lower than in the Protectorate, and their availability is even more dubious.

1. Prices for 1943 came in most instances from a Jewish source, and may therefore be above normal, as prices to Jews are usually higher than those to "Aryans." The source was unable to give information on meat and cheese, which Jews are not allowed to buy.

There is a serious scarcity of fats, butter being restricted to children, invalids, and expectant mothers and margarine doled out to other consumers in extremely small quantities. Edible oil is unavailable, as is lard. Other foodstuffs appear to be seasonally scarce.

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

Slovakian farmers work under state controls. Cultivation of grain, oilseeds, sugar beets, etc., is compulsory, delivery quotas are set, and free sales to consumers discouraged, though in some cases (as in that of honey) direct sales of surpluses over delivery quotas are permitted. Since Slovakia is "independent," German influence on food production and collection is less obvious than in the Protectorate, and fewer details are available as to the system.

D. Barter and Hoarding

No data are available as to the extent of bartering. Hoarding of crops by peasants for disposal at black market prices is denounced; in May 1943 it was necessary to permit the free sale of potatoes for fodder and distilling, in order to bring forth the stocks which had been withheld by the peasants. In June of the same year, some dealers who received egg supplies a week late were rebuked for concealing from their customers the fact that both weeks' rations were valid, and retaining the surplus for black market sales. Some Bratislava butchers were accused of withholding customers' meat rations on the pretense

of not having received any meat; this situation was met by publishing the quantities of meat allotted to the city each week. These instances, however, are chiefly cases of individual graft. More significant as an example of the existence of hoarding on farms is a December press statement that of total requirements of 180 million liters of milk in 1943, only 50 million were delivered. Even if exaggerated, the statement certainly indicates withholding on a large scale.

IV. DENMARK

A. Prices

The following table shows some typical official prices (in kroner per kilogram) for 1939, 1942 and 1943.

	1939	1942	1943 Copenhagen	1943 Provinces
Bread:				
Wheat	0.85	1.26	1.23	0.80
Rye	0.22	0.30	---[a]	---[a]
Flour	0.37	0.70	---[a]	---[a]
Sugar	0.58	0.40	---[a]	---[a]
Meat:				
Beef, 1st quality	2.86)	3.94	6.00	5.00
" 2nd "	1.68)		2.00	2.80
Veal, 1st quality	2.67)	2.85	5.20	5.00
" 2nd "	1.57)		5.00	4.80
Pork	2.05	5.29	4.00	4.00
Lard	1.83	4.26	---[a]	---[a]
Milk (liter):				
Unskimmed	0.33	0.45	---[a]	---[a]
Skimmed	0.10	0.16	---[a]	---[a]
Butter	3.03	4.40	---[a]	---[a]
Cheese	2.00	3.44	---[a]	---[a]
Eggs (each)	0.13	0.19	0.18-0.20	0.12-0.14
Margarine	1.15	1.84	---[a]	---[a]
Potatoes	0.08	0.25	---[a]	---[a]
Cabbage	0.12	0.25	---[a]	---[a]
Carrots	0.20	0.30	---[a]	---[a]
Herrings	0.71	1.25	---[a]	---[a]

a. No information on price.

The black market has little or no importance in Denmark.

B. Scarcities

Few foodstuffs are rationed in Denmark, and rations are almost always fully available. The only scarce food at present seems to be fish, supplies of which (especially in towns) have been curtailed this year by an uneven catch, fairly heavy exports to Germany during the first eight

months, and transport difficulties coupled with sabotage of fish-packing plants since August.

Because of Denmark's generally favorable food position, no serious black market problem has arisen. The only foods sold at abnormal prices are luxuries such as real coffee. However, shortages of clothing and shoes (particularly for workmen and children) have become more serious during the past year, and the manufacture of many other everyday essentials has been curtailed or stopped altogether by shortages of labor and of imported fuel and raw material.

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

Denmark's agriculture remains relatively free. Though the Germans have pressed the Danes for large food exports, sufficient surpluses have been available without (so far) the exercise of extensive new controls over agriculture by either Danish or German authorities. The method for obtaining export surpluses has been largely that of reducing Danish consumption, rather than that of increasing deliveries from farms. However, despite exports, rations have been maintained at a comparatively high level.

Some effort has been made to prevent direct sales from farmer to consumer, particularly in the case of pork (an item greatly in demand by the Germans). Nevertheless, the Danes are still in a position to purchase extra food from the country if they so desire, though the limited

range of the ration system makes possible far more varied purchases on legal urban markets than anywhere else in Europe.

D. Barter and Hoarding

The same favorable circumstances render barter and hoarding relatively unnecessary, although these practices probably occur in connection with high-quality or luxury goods.

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V. FRANCE

A. Prices

The following table shows some typical official prices for everyday commodities in 1939, 1942 and 1943 (in francs per kilogram) as well as illustrations of black market prices for 1942 and 1943.

	Official			Black Market	
	1939	1942	1943	1942	1943
Bread (standard)	3.15	3.70	3.75	35-40.00	50.00[a]
Flour	3.05	3.47	--[a]	32.00	--[a]
Sugar	6.35	8.45	12.50	100-200.00	250.00
Meat:					
Beef, 1st quality	30.00	40.00)			
" 2nd "	13.65	38.00)			
Veal, 1st quality	32.40	34.00)			
" 2nd "	16.10	25.00)	--[a]	60-85.00	300.00
Pork, 1st quality	25.50)	36.40)			
" 2nd "	16.10)	)			
Milk, unskimmed (liter)	1.80	2.90	--[a]	--[a]	300.00
Butter	23.20	42.00	72.00[a]	80-130.00	400-500.00
Cheese	23.00	27.00	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Eggs (each)	1.05	2.00	2.59	2-3.00	10-12.00
Vegetable oil (liter)	8.95	27.00	57.00	350.00[a]	1600.00
Potatoes	1.40	2.95	3.50[a]	--[a]	25.00
Cabbage	2.00	6.00	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Carrots	2.00	5.50	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Spaghetti	10.20	12.80	--	--[a]	--
Wine	3.50	6.00	20-40.00	--	50-60.00
Fruit:					
Cherries	--[a]	--[a]	25.00	--[a]	--[a]
Peaches	--[a]	--[a]	25.00	--[a]	--
Strawberries	--[a]	--[a]	20.00	--[a]	60.00[a]
Pears	--[a]	--[a]	35.00	--[a]	--
Grapes	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	90.00
Cigarettes (pack)	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	140.00
Suit, man's	--[a]	--[a]	1500.00	--[a]	7000.00
Shirt, man's	--[a]	--[a]	260.00	--[a]	1200.00
Shoes, ladies' (leather)	--[a]	--[a]	--[b]	--[a]	6-8000.00
Stockings, silk	--[a]	--[a]	--	--[a]	400.00

a. No information on price.
b. Product not available on legal market.

There have been reports of a downward trend in black market prices, beginning in July 1943 and attributed to the expectation of increased supplies to result from an imminent Allied invasion. So far the only illustrations available are the prices of edible oil and sugar. After Mussolini's fall, the black market price of oil went down to 450 francs per liter, and the price of sugar in Lyon fell from 250 francs in November to 130 francs in December.

B. Scarcities

Though urban rations in France are small, they are not always available. Shortages of vegetables and fruit vary according to season and region. Meat, butter and edible oil are almost universally scarce. Residents of provincial towns are allotted smaller rations than city-dwellers, but, being nearer the source of supply, have a better chance of receiving the full quantities; they also have more opportunity to supplement their rations by purchases from farmers.

Shortages that can most nearly be called "absolute" exist mostly in luxury and high-quality goods (real coffee, good tobacco, vintage wines, woolen textiles, leather shoes, etc.). There are also serious shortages of many household articles the manufacture of which has been greatly curtailed or altogether abolished because of actual wartime shortages in materials, labor or power, or because of German demands. Hence furniture, crockery, tableware, household linens, paper, string, soap, and the like are now available only at high prices and in inferior quality.

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

Strict surrender quotas have been established for livestock, meat, hides, wool, fruits and vegetables (fortnightly collection), butter, milk, grains (wheat, rye, barley, corn, oats), wine, potatoes, eggs, sugar beets, and oilseeds. The quotas are large, and, if observed, leave practically nothing for the farmer to sell after his own needs are supplied. In actual practice, however, the farmers are able to withhold sufficient produce for considerable direct dealing with city consumers. The "family package" system, which permits peasants to send to "relatives" in the city parcels of food weighing up to 25 kilograms, is the administration's tacit recognition of its inability to prevent direct sales. In some cases, such sales are even encouraged in order to move a bulky crop such as potatoes; after the last potato harvest, consumers could obtain transport authorization for sizeable quantities of potatoes if they could purchase and move them privately. Apparently farmers who will not surrender their potatoes to collection agents will consent to sell them to consumers whom they know.

There is also a considerable illegal market maintained by direct farmer-consumer dealings, which enables workers to supplement their rations at reasonable prices. This market goes under a variety of names. The French call it "Marché de Solidarité", because it symbolizes a joint farm-town front against the Nazi control system.

Because it is neither strictly legal nor of the black market profiteering variety, it is known as the "Marché Gris" or "Marché Rose." To the Nazis, it is one of the gravest of illegal market problems, since it entirely excludes their participation and control.

D. Barter and Hoarding

Paris (like many other French cities) obtains extra food beyond rations by means of week-end barter deals in the country. In many cases these are individual transactions, benefiting not only the ill-paid townspeople, but the peasants, who can thus acquire the essential clothing, tools, household goods and other manufactures whose prices are beyond his reach. There is also bartering of second-hand consumer goods within cities, as well as exchanging of foods in the country districts. Barter with peasants is used in addition by individual black marketers, who sell the food thus obtained to reliable customers in the city.

A significant amount of food hoarding by peasants takes place, both in order to supply the black market and the Marché Rose, and to raise rural food consumption or provide for future contingencies. Hoarding of other commodities, both household essentials and luxuries, is universal, in view of the barter value of such articles; on a large scale, this furnishes material for black market dealings, and on a small scale it provides desirable goods which can be exchanged for food. A wealth of evidence indicates that the bartering of his remaining household and luxury goods is the

only way in which the average Frenchman can now feed himself and his family, since wages no longer cover expenses.

VI. GERMANY

A. Prices

The table below shows some typical official prices (in Reichsmarks per kilogram) for 1939, 1942, and April 1943.

	1939	1942	April 1943
Bread (rye)	0.33	0.33	0.32
Flour	0.46	0.46	0.43
Sugar	0.74	0.76	0.76
Meat (with bone)			
Beef	1.70	1.70	1.63
Veal	2.03	2.01	2.01
Pork	1.60	1.60	1.65
Lard	2.08	2.08	2.11
Milk (liter):			
Unskimmed	0.24	0.26	0.25[a]
Skimmed	0.14	0.14	--[a]
Butter	3.20	3.80	--[a]
Margarine	0.12	0.13	--[a]
Potatoes	0.09	0.09[a]	0.11[a]
Cabbage	0.20	--[a]	--[a]
Carrots	0.16	0.17	--[a]

a. No information on price.

Very little information on later 1943 prices has come to hand. Prices mentioned in letters from Germany vary so widely from region to region as to give the impression that they must be black market prices. Official prices of rationed foodstuffs are hardly ever mentioned. Some potato prices are quoted, but usually at a time of seasonal potato scarcity. It would appear that prices are generally mentioned in letters only if they are out of the ordinary.

B. Scarcities

German rations are not only generous in comparison with those of other European countries, but are also almost

always available in full. From time to time substitutions are made (as in the case of extra bread rations to compensate for decreased potato rations last fall), but the food card is always good for some kind of food, except in very unusual circumstances. Regular announcements are made as to the composition of the fats and Nährmittel (cereal products) rations, and when scarce products are removed from the ration they are always replaced by others of as nearly equal food value as possible. Prices, too, have been controlled with considerable success, so that Germans are in general able to purchase all the food to which their ration cards entitle them.

After repeated heavy air raids, the ration system has begun to show some disorganization. When food shops and stocks are destroyed and ration books lost, ordinary rations cannot be fulfilled. Special distributions are then combined with emergency feeding stations until the regular ration system can again be put into working order. This entails great difficulties. Since the smooth working of the German ration system has been (at least in part) dependent on careful consumer registration and identification, recovery after raids is complicated by evacuation, destruction of records, etc. An increasing number of persons are posing as air-raid victims to obtain extra ration books and certificates for purchase of such household articles as are issued only to the bombed-out.

Shortages in clothing and shoes (both rationed) have been much aggravated by air-raid destruction of personal wardrobes, government stocks, and supplies in retail shops. Purchases of textile goods by ordinary consumers have been suspended (except for a few special cases). Only air-raid victims who have lost everything may now purchase clothing, and their ability to do so is conditioned by the state of local stocks and distribution facilities. The same situation exists in household furnishings and equipment, supplies of which were becoming tight even before the heavy raids began.

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

Germany's controls over agricultural production are the best-organized in Europe. Every farm is registered, its acreage of various crops prescribed, its livestock numbered, and delivery quotas set for all its produce. Thorough as the system is, however, it has proved difficult to control a farm population as large as Germany's. Until this year a considerable loophole in delivery obligations remained unplugged, in the form of "self-suppliers'" rations. In practice, many farmers formerly sold part of their self-supplier rations. Purchase of these goods by evacuees and other urban consumers was referred to in the press as "hoarding." Though the farmer is technically free to dispose of his rations, the fear that tempting offers would induce him to sell part of his surrender quota as well, led to a progressive tightening of the rules in regard

to self-suppliers' rations. In January 1944 a directive was finally issued by the Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture, forbidding self-suppliers to sell State-controlled agricultural produce to which they are entitled for their own consumption.

D. Barter and Hoarding

Bartering in Germany has become so widespread that the government's intervention and acquiescence has been necessary. Official barter-centers covering many types of goods have been established in Königsberg, Bielefeld, Essen, Stuttgart, Munich, Breslau, Chemnitz, Bremen, Leipzig, Kiel, and other cities. In July 1943 a Freiburg paper mentioned a warning by Reichsminister Funk against the dangers of barter as tending to undermine faith in the value of German money; nevertheless, later in the month, Funk consented to the establishment of a private exchange service to be set up by the Trade Group for Private Pawnbrokers. Articles brought in to be exchanged may (for a fee) be left at pawnshops until a suitable deal can be arranged, and retail shops may also set up such centers. Under such sponsorship, a rushing business is being done by all barter-centers. Between July and November 1943, the Bremen office arranged 17,000 exchanges, and the Leipzig office had so many articles to value that barter transactions were greatly delayed, making it necessary to accept articles only from Thursdays to Saturdays so that deals could be arranged from Mondays to Wednesdays.

Despite these official centers, illegal bartering continues at a lively rate. Private transactions usually involve sales of consumer goods against food, the proceeds being re-bartered to obtain further stocks. Rationed textiles (not listed among the dealer's stocks) are sold against rationed foods, with no coupons demanded on either side. When culprits are caught, severe sentences are announced with much publicity. However, the practice is difficult to stamp out.

VII. HUNGARY

A. Prices

The table on the following pages indicates official prices (in pengoe per kilogram) for some everyday commodities in 1939, 1942, and 1943, with 1943 black market prices where available. (Provincial prices are those current in the towns of Huszt (Hungarian-occupied Czechoslovakia), Papa, and Ungvar, in October 1943.)

B. Scarcities

Food rations are in general available. "Officially unavailable" in Budapest, but sold on the black market, are rice (at 8 to 10 pengoe per kilogram), poultry (see table), honey (limited to children; black market price 10 to 12 pengoe), tea (250 pengoe), coffee (300 to 350 pengoe), and edible oil (18 to 20 pengoe for sunflower oil). Butter was unavailable in Budapest until the summer of 1943, but is now distributed occasionally in small quantities. Cheese is so scarce that it cannot be included in the rationing system, and is rarely to be found even on the black market. Unavailable in the provinces are white rolls, rice and semolina, cheese, coffee and tea; unrationed but scarce are eggs, dried legumes, and butter. Foods forbidden to Jews (and scarce for non-Jews) are edible fats (lard and oil) and meat. Potatoes were fairly scarce in both country and city during most of 1943, but a good harvest has provided abundant supplies at low prices. Other vegetables are still scarce.

			Official 1943		Black Market 1943	
	1939	1942	Budapest	Provinces	Budapest	Provinces
Bread	0.42	0.48	0.60	0.58	5-6.00	1.50
Rolls (white)	--[a]	--[a]	0.06	--[a]	0.30	--[a]
Flour	0.40	0.70	0.60	1.02-1.29	6.00	3.20-4.00
Sugar	1.06	1.06	2.03	2.10-2.40	12-16.00	7-15.00
Meat:						
Beef, 1st	2.10	5.00)	4.00	5.20	10.00	--[a]
" 2nd	2.00	2.90)				
Veal, 1st	2.40	4.20)	5.00	5.60	12.00	--[a]
" 2nd	1.40	3.30)				
Pork, 1st	2.06	4.10)	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
" 2nd	1.61	2.40)				
Poultry:						
Chicken	--[a]	--[a]	--[b]	6.00	10-12.00[a]	12.00[a]
Goose	--[a]	--[a]	--[b]	15-18.00	--[a]	--[a]
Eggs (each)	0.10	0.25	0.25-0.32	0.18-0.25	1.20	0.40-0.60
Milk (liter)						
Unskimmed	0.30[a]	0.50[a]	0.70	0.45-0.52[a]	1.20[a]	1.50[a]
Cream (liter)	--[a]	--[a]	2.80	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Cheese:						
Hard	2.30[a]	--[a]	--[b]	--[b]	--[a]	12.00[a]
Cottage	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	2.00-3.00	--[a]	--[a]
Butter	3.30	6.00	10.20	7.00-12.00[a]	30.00	18-22.00
Lard	1.68[a]	3.30[a]	3.90	--[a]	18-20.00[a]	14.00[a]
Margarine	--[a]	--[a]	1.30[a]	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Oil (liter)	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	12.00	--[a]	18-20.00[a]
Potatoes	--[a]	0.24[a]	0.40	0.30-0.32	--[a]	[a]
Salt	--[a]	--[a]	0.45	0.45[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Shirt, man's	--[a]	40.00	110-150.00	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Suit, man's	--[a]	400.00	1800.00	150-300.00	--	--

			Official 1943		Black Market 1943	
	1939	1942	Budapest	Provinces	Budapest	Provinces
Shoes:						
Leather soles	50.00	--[a]	40-60.00	--[a]	350-400.00[a]	--[a]
Substitute "	--[a]	32.00[a]	50-60.00[a]	40-100.00	--	--
Leather soles	--[a]	--	--	60-80.00	30-40.00	100-180.00
Soap:						
Toilet	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	7-10.00	100-120.00	--[a]
Common	--[a]	--[a]	--	4-8.00	15-20.00[a]	--[a]
Matches (box)	--[a]	--[a]	0.08	0.08	--	--[a]
Cigarettes (each)						
Cheapest	--[a]	0.04[a]	0.07	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Most expensive	--[a]	--	0.22	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Fuel:						
Coal (quintal)	--[a]	8.00[a]	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Firewood (")	--[a]	--	--[a]	6-11.00	--[a]	--[a]

a. No information on prices.
b. Product not available on legal market.

Scarcities in other commodities include leather soles and leather-soled shoes, which are obtainable only by special permits (none issued to Jews); textiles and clothing; good soap (rations provide only inferior products); cigarettes (sold only two or four at a time); and coal (rationing introduced after September 1943).

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

A complete list of the products to be surrendered by farmers is not available. Compulsory surrender of grain products varies from year to year, with percentages of the different grains adjusted according to the harvest. In order to encourage the surrender of grain, farmers are being paid higher prices this year for all quantities exceeding their quotas. Acreages and quotas of industrial plants (oilseeds, sugar beets, tobacco, etc.) are also set each year. Cattle requisitioning was extremely severe in 1943, but was relaxed in the fall. Slaughtering, however, is still strictly controlled, and fat resulting from pig slaughter is to be surrendered at the rate of 5 kilograms from every pig slaughtered for sale, and for pigs slaughtered for home consumption 4 kilograms from the first pig and 8 from every subsequent one. Milk is delivered to central cooperative dairies. Coarse wool is all delivered to the army and government, though fine wool is released for the public.

Direct sales to Budapest consumers are governed (but hardly restricted by a multitude of regulations, including the

following: flour may only be taken to the city by producers or persons receiving cereals as payment in kind; the transport of fats to Budapest requires a permit from the place of origin and from the food-card center; potatoes require a permit from the Potato Center or the "Union of the Inland Potato Trade", and may be transported only by producers or those receiving payment in kind. Quantities of food which may be taken or sent to Budapest by individuals without a permit are: beans, peas, lentils (10 kilograms); onions (10 kilograms); meat (5 kilograms if carried, 10 kilograms if mailed, but in the latter case a permit is required); chickens (2 kilograms); eggs (2 kilograms); turkeys (one kilogram). It would appear that these regulations represent the acknowledgement of a fait accompli, and that direct sales to Budapest consumers involve a significant amount of food.

D. Barter and Hoarding

The only bit of information that has come to hand concerning resistance to the controls of food production and distribution is derived from a speech by Prime Minister Kállay in December 1943, in which he remonstrated with "the public, the producers, consumers and middlemen as a class and as active elements," accusing them of obstructing the carrying-out of the decrees, and implying that such activities were in fact successful. "After all, the notary of a village with a few thousand inhabitants cannot do everything alone in the face of the passive or active resistance

of the inhabitants." If Kállay's listing of resistance elements is accurate, disobedience of food controls is practically universal. At any rate, it is probable that considerable hoarding is done by peasants, and that they connive with consumers in the provinces and in Budapest to evade regulations.

VIII. THE NETHERLANDS

A. Prices

Official prices of everyday articles (in florins per kilogram) are shown below for 1939 and 1942, with some 1942 and 1943 black market prices for comparison.

	Official		Black Market	
	1939	1942	1942	1943
Bread:				
Wheat	0.20	0.25	2.50	--[a]
Rye	0.18	0.19	--[a]	1.25
Flour	0.19	0.21	2.50	--[a]
Sugar	0.47	0.55	--	13.00
Meat:				
Beef, 1st quality	1.31	2.30)		
" 2nd "	1.09	1.00)		
Veal, 1st "	1.42	1.80)	5-7.00	--[a]
" 2nd "	0.69	1.40)		
Pork, 1st "	1.35)	1.80)		
" 2nd "	0.88)	)		
Lard	1.12	1.65	--[a]	--[a]
Milk (liter)				
Unskimmed	0.12	0.20	--[a]	--[a]
Skimmed	0.07	0.12	--[a]	--[a]
Butter	1.68	2.60	12.00	40-50.00
Cheese	0.82	1.70	--[a]	--[a]
Eggs	0.06	0.11	0.40	--[a]
Margarine	1.15	1.40	--[a]	--[a]
Potatoes	0.06	0.09	--[a]	--[a]
Cabbage	0.07	0.16	--[a]	--[a]
Coffee	--[a]	2.00	9-12.00	--[a]
Shoes (leather)	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	60-70.00
Cigarettes (20)	0.30	--[a]	--[a]	15.00
Soap	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	3.00

a. No information on price.

An interview with Dr. H. C. Schokker, Netherlands Price Commissioner, in July 1943, quotes him as saying that price levels should not be judged by "the fantastic sums paid by a small minority for luxury articles, pre-war commodities and everyday foodstuffs obtained through the black market." The last phrase lends interest to another

remark in the same interview, to the effect that the successful operation of price control is shown by the fact that "no one paid more than the fixed price for any of the essential rationed foodstuffs."

B. Scarcities

Surprisingly, the chief scarcity in the Netherlands, once a leading dairy country, is that of dairy products. Butter has been unavailable on the open market in 1943, and milk and cheese are both severely rationed. There have also been serious shortages of fruits and vegetables. Contrary to the usual "New Order" practice, the black market in vegetables is admitted to be a result and not a cause of the vegetable shortage, which is blamed on lack of imports and preserved vegetables, together with the public's desire for varieties not being grown because of labor shortage.

The clothing ration card is now used also to obtain household goods, for which purchase permits are issued only to urgent cases such as new households and air-raid victims.

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

Compulsory surrender quotas have been established and severely enforced. In June 1943, it was announced that licenses for home slaughtering would be granted only to those farmers who delivered sufficient quantities of grain, seed, and leguminous plants after the harvest. Despite the fact that non-fulfilment in this case is equivalent to cancellation of the farmer's meat ration, and that other

infractions call forth equally severe penalties, farmers are increasingly ignoring or evading instructions, and armed clashes with control agents have occurred.

Since July 1943, direct sales of fruit have been prohibited, except for growers having a retailer's certificate and not possessing more than 50 acres for fruit growing. Private sale of vegetables is limited to 2.5 kilograms daily for any one person, and to residents of the grower's own municipality. In large communities, no private sales of vegetables may take place except under the same restrictions as those mentioned above for fruit. A stringent "road control" system is intended to catch illegal transport of food, but it is admitted that wealthy patrons of the black market can still get their vegetables delivered at home.

D. Barter and Hoarding

No information is available on the extent of bartering, but it is believed that it is not so prevalent as in countries whose situation with regard to food or consumer goods is more difficult. The "Centrale Controle Dienst" makes strong efforts to prevent the withholding of farm products and their sale without coupons, the illegal manufacture of butter and cheese, and the illegal slaughter of meat. However, its record of confiscations in the six months between 1 April and 1 October 1943 is unimpressive: 48 tons of grain, seeds and leguminous products, 207 cheeses, 941 tons of vegetables and fruit, 36 tons of meat and bacon,

269 head of cattle, 666 pigs, 553 sheep, and 84 horses. It seems probable that considerable quantities of produce eluded the CCD agents.

IX. NORWAY

A. Prices

In the following table, some typical official prices for 1939 and 1942 (in kroner per kilogram) are contrasted with sample black market prices for 1943 and 1944.

	Official		Black Market	
	1939	1942	1943	1944
Bread				
Wheat	0.90	1.14	--[a]	--[a]
Rye	0.43	0.51	--[a]	--[a]
Flour	0.38	0.44	15.00	8.50
Sugar	0.86	1.59	25.00	12.00
Meat:				
Beef, 1st quality	2.74	4.50		
" 2nd "	2.06			
Veal, 1st "	2.36	2.88	40.00	--[a]
" 2nd "	1.60			
Pork, 1st "	2.95	3.79		
" 2nd "	2.61	3.32		
Lard	--[a]	2.30	--[a]	--[a]
Milk (liter)				
Unskimmed	0.31	0.42	--[a]	--[a]
Skimmed	0.11	0.25	--[a]	--[a]
Butter	3.60	5.20	45-80.00	27.20
Cheese	2.40	3.60	25.00	13.60-22.10[a]
Eggs (each)	0.13	0.25	1.50-2.00	--[a]
Poultry (per kilogram)				
Goose	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	16.00
Chicken	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	10.00
Duck	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	11.25
Rabbit (per kilogram)	--[a]	--	--[a]	10.00[a]
Margarine	2.00	2.50	--[a]	--[a]
Potatoes	0.17	0.22[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Cabbage	0.24	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Herrings	0.58	0.90[a]	--[a]	--[a]
Coffee	--[a]	--[a]	200-500.00	--[a]
Tea	--[a]	--[a]	1200-2000.00	--[a]
Cigarettes (each)	--[a]	--[a]	0.85-2.00	--[a]

a. No information on price.

B. Scarcities

The 1943 black market prices listed above were quoted by the Nazi Aftenposten 15 January 1944 from an "illegal pamphlet", which announced the establishment of

a national price committee to fix black market prices, and stated that the black market is intended not for Germans, collaborationists and selfish capitalists, but for the Norwegian people. Farmers were urged to deliver maximum amounts to the black market at reasonable prices. The prices mentioned are said to be decreased ones, effective from 15 January 1944. Minister Fuglesang, in quoting from this pamphlet, blames this "anti-social" (i.e., anti-German) black market for the fact that rations cannot be increased. It is clear, however, that there are other reasons for food scarcities in Norway. The black market (Norwegian, as distinguished from that maintained by and for Germans and collaborationists) is now, like the Belgian and French models (cf. p. 17) a form of resistance, and the main source of food supplies for the underground. It is also the only means of making available for domestic consumption such quantities of food as can be hidden from German collection agents. Without it urban food scarcities would be even more severe. By now most everyday foods, even fish, are in short supply in urban areas. Rationed quantities are frequently unobtainable; in the case of meat and fats the rations are mostly non-existent, and even special distributions are extremely rare. Milk rations, though very low, are seldom fulfilled.

Scarcities of commodities other than food are severe in Norway. Clothing is rationed and difficult to obtain; leather shoes have disappeared, while even shoes

of substitute materials are high-priced and hard to find. Paper, dishes, silverware, soap, and the like are rarities. Norway's labor force has been shifted out of the production of consumer goods into the building of German fortifications, into fish-packing plants and war industries in Norway, and into agriculture and forestry. Hence shortages of everyday household articles are due to become still more serious.

C. Obligatory Delivery of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

The Germans have imposed their usual thorough system of produce deliveries upon Norwegian agriculture. This is enforced without regard for the economy of the individual farm, to the point where farmers have sometimes been obliged to surrender the next year's seed potatoes and seed grain in order to meet their large quotas. Compulsory surrender of cattle has played havoc with the dairy and meat situation, and German requisitioning of horses (together with lack of fuel for tractors) has made the farm traction position a grave one. Some irregular confiscations by the Wehrmacht are always to be expected in addition to the compulsory surrender quotas. However, it is impossible for the Germans to check every farm in Norway, and evasion of surrender duties undoubtedly takes place in the more remote sections. Direct sales to urban consumers, though illegal, are of great importance in supplementing the meager supplies available on city markets. By this means urban and rural food consumption levels are brought closer together.

D. Barter and Hoarding

Little is available in Norway for barter. Confiscation by the Germans has been heavy, not only as regards food and livestock but also as regards blankets, boots, etc. Some barter deals, involving what few goods are left, undoubtedly occur, but the supply of exchangeable articles is certainly not large enough to create much of a problem for the authorities. As for hoarding, the same conditions apply; heavy requisitions and strict control have probably limited it to small private stocks safeguarded for purposes of emergency aid to relatives and friends.

X. POLAND

A. Prices

Recent data on Polish prices are unavailable. Latest official prices in Warsaw, as quoted below (zloty per kilogram) are for April 1942. Black market prices for 1943 are Hungarian estimates.

	Official				Black Market
	Dec. 1939	Dec. 1940	Dec. 1941	April 1942	(est. June) 1943
Bread (rye)	0.77	2.03	7.00	9.15	20-24.00
Sugar	2.55	7.70	24.05	46.50	--[a]
Meat (beef)	2.87	6.73	19.70	28.50	190.00
Lard	6.33	14.56	47.90	79.50	350.00
Salt	0.71	0.35	0.36	3.30	--[a]
Coal (ton)	530.00	565.00	1385.00	1100.00	--[a]
Shoe soles	15.00	45.00	110.00	--[a]	--[a]
Cigarettes	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	--[a]	120.00

a. No information on prices.

B. Scarcities

While food production in the Government General should be more than sufficient to cover rations, individual Poles are often unable to obtain even what their rations call for. This is due not only to scarcities on the markets but to lack of purchasing power and to restrictions placed on shopping facilities. The problems of Poles in the provinces incorporated into the Reich are similar, except for those working in German factories or for the administration, whose situation is more like that of Reich Germans.

Scarcities of most other commodities (clothing, shoes and household essentials) are such that even well-worn goods have tremendous value in exchange for food.

C. Obligatory Deliveries of Foodstuffs; Direct Sales

German controls over agriculture in the two chief areas of old Poland are strict. In the incorporated provinces, an attempt has been made to settle German farmers in place of dispossessed Poles, and methods of rural administration are applied much as in Germany. In the Government General, however, the farm population is largely Polish and very hostile; hence the German administration operates under harsher rules. Large surrender quotas are set for most types of produce, and the penalties assessed for failure to deliver or for inciting others to neglect their quotas vary from fines and imprisonment to confiscation of the farm or even death. Enforcement in the incorporated provinces undoubtedly pays due regard to the maintenance of this region's surplus grain and potato production; reasonable self-suppliers' rations and seed supplies are allowed, and less harsh punishments prescribed for surrender shortages.

Direct sales to consumers are in general forbidden, but are practiced nevertheless, as contact with the countryside is the only means by which the average Pole's slender rations can be supplemented. Jews, who are forbidden to leave the Ghettoes, much less travel outside the cities in search of food, are thus condemned to starvation.

D. Barter and Hoarding

Barter is universal in the Government General. Even Germans must resort to it in order to obtain extra food (and sometimes in order to supply the black market they are said to operate); for Poles it is a necessity, since as a rule they cannot pay black market prices. German soldiers receiving packages of clothing from relatives immediately trade the contents for food; in September 1943, a letter from one officer in Warsaw anticipated the exchange of an old cap for a few eggs or some butter, a shirt for a kilogram of bacon or butter, and a pair of old trousers for a fattened goose. Tobacco is universally used in barter deals.

The question of hoarding is largely academic in a country beset by so many requisitions, collections, enforced contributions and house-to-house searches. Nevertheless, the Germans continue to publish death sentences of hoarders and black marketers. From these it would appear that well-organized groups are managing to obtain stocks of textiles, clothing and food by robbery and bribery of Germans and by efficient management of peasant resistance.

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Markets & prices, Occupied Countries 2.21.6

" " " , Germany "

Commodity shortages " 2.19.3

" " , Occupied Countries "

Illegal activity " hoarding 6.18

" " , Germany "

Methods & ce. Occupied Countries by " 7.11.1

" " "

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